

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A three-dimensional flexible ~~fibrous network~~ non-woven fabric comprising a flexible textile non-woven substrate ~~having that has been processed through thermo-forming or calender molding equipment to form a~~ multiplicity of compressible projections which return to their shape after being substantially compressed, wherein the non-woven substrate is ~~selected from the group consisting of nonwovens, wovens, knits and braids~~ a non-meltblown non-woven fabric, manufactured from spun-bonded or melt-bonded filaments and/or fibers with a diameter of less than 100 microns ~~or at least one principal cross-sectional dimension of less than 100 microns~~ and having an anisotropy ratio  $f_p$  between  $-\frac{1}{2}$  to  $+\frac{1}{2}$ .
2. (Canceled)
3. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 1 wherein the substrate is wholly or partially made up of a thermoplastic fiber or polymer with melting temperature in the range of 70 C to 450 C.
4. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 3 wherein the thermoplastic polymer is a co-polyetherester elastomer with long chain ether-ester units and short chain ester units joined head to tail through ester linkages.

5. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber-network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 3 wherein the thermoplastic polymer is a poly(ethylene terephthalate) or poly(trimethylene terephthalate).
6. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber-network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 3 wherein the thermoplastic polymer is selected from nylon 6, nylon 6,6, polypropylene or polyethylene.
7. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber-network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 3 wherein the thermoplastic fiber is homo-component, bicomponent, or multi-component.
8. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber-network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 3 wherein the thermoplastic fiber used in the substrate is selected from the group consisting of: polyesters, polyamides, thermoplastic copolyetherester elastomers, polyolefines, polyacrylates, and thermoplastic liquid crystalline polymers.
9. (Canceled)
10. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber-network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 1 wherein the ~~fibrous-network~~ non-woven fabric has projections or depressions measuring 0.1 mm to 5 cm in height.

11. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber-network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 1 wherein the ~~fibrous-network~~ non-woven fabric comprises projections or depressions measuring between 0.1 mm and 100 mm in width.
12. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber-network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 1 wherein the projections have a frusto-conical shape.
13. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber-network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 1 wherein the ~~fibrous-network~~ non-woven fabric most suitably comprises filaments and/or fibers with diameters of about 1-20 microns for soft structures and 20-100 microns for more rigid structures.
14. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber-network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 1 wherein the ~~fibrous-network~~ non-woven fabric comprises partially oriented fibers and/or filaments.
15. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber-network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 1 wherein the ~~fibrous-network~~ non-woven fabric also contains a thermoset resin.
16. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber-network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 1 wherein the ~~fibrous-network~~ non-woven fabric is stiffened by nesting head-to-head or head-to-tail two or more layers of said network.
17. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber-network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 1 wherein the ~~fibrous-network~~ non-woven fabric can be stiffened by laminating a

planar nonwoven, woven or knitted or other planar structure such as a film or a polymeric or metallic sheet to the ~~network~~ fabric.

18. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber-network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 1 wherein the fiber comprises a tipped trilobal cross-section wherein one component melts at a lower temperature.

19. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber-network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 1 wherein the fiber comprises a sheath/core cross-section wherein the sheath melts at a lower temperature than the core.

20. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber-network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 1 wherein the fiber comprises a side-by-side cross-section wherein one sheath melts at a lower temperature than the other.

21-24. (Canceled)

25. (Currently Amended) A three-dimensional flexible ~~fibrous-network~~ non-woven fabric comprising a molded flexible textile non-woven substrate having that has been processed through thermo-forming or calender molding equipment to form a multiplicity of compressible projections which return to their shape after being substantially compressed, wherein the non-woven substrate is ~~selected from the group consisting of wovens, knits and braids~~ a non-meltblown non-woven fabric manufactured from spun-bonded or melt-bonded filaments and/or fibers with a diameter of less than 100 microns ~~or at least one~~

~~principal cross-sectional dimension of less than 100 microns and nonwovens manufactured from filaments and/or fibers with a diameter of greater than 100 microns and having an anisotropy ratio  $f_0$  between  $-\frac{1}{2}$  to  $+\frac{1}{2}$  and~~ where the fiber-to-fiber crossover intersections are partially or fully fused during the molding process to provide substantial rigidity to the flexible textile substrate.

26. (Canceled)
27. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 25 wherein the substrate is wholly or partially made up of a thermoplastic fiber or polymer with melting temperature in the range of 70 C to 450 C.
28. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 27 wherein the thermoplastic polymer is a co-polyetherester elastomer with long chain ether-ester units and short chain ester units joined head to tail through ester linkages.
29. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 27 wherein the thermoplastic polymer is a poly(ethylene terephthalate) or poly(trimethylene terephthalate).
30. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 27 wherein the thermoplastic polymer is selected from nylon 6, nylon 6,6, polypropylene or polyethylene.

31. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber-network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 27 wherein the thermoplastic fiber is homo-component, bicomponent, or multi-component.
32. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber-network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 27 wherein the thermoplastic fiber used in the substrate is selected from the group consisting of: polyesters, polyamides, thermoplastic copolyetherester elastomers, polyoefines, polyacrylates, and thermoplastic liquid crystalline polymers.
33. (Canceled)
34. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber-network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 25 wherein the ~~fibrous-network~~ non-woven fabric has projections or depressions measuring 0.1 mm to 5 cm in height.
35. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber-network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 25 wherein the ~~fibrous-network~~ non-woven fabric comprises projections or depressions measuring between 0.1 mm and 100 mm in width.
36. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber-network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 25 wherein the projections have a frusto-conical shape.

37. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber-network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 25 wherein the ~~fibrous-network~~ non-woven fabric comprises partially oriented fibers and/or filaments.
38. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber-network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 25 wherein the ~~fibrous-network~~ non-woven fabric also contains a thermoset resin.
39. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber-network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 25 wherein the ~~fibrous-network~~ non-woven fabric is stiffened by nesting head-to-head or head-to-tail two or more layers of said ~~network~~ fabric.
40. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber-network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 25 wherein the ~~fibrous-network~~ non-woven fabric can be stiffened by laminating a planar nonwoven, woven or knitted or other planar structure such as a film or a polymeric or metallic sheet to the ~~network~~ fabric.
41. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber-network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 25 wherein the fiber comprises a tipped trilobal cross-section wherein one component melts at a lower temperature.
42. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber-network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 25 wherein the fiber comprises a sheath/core cross-section wherein the sheath melts at a lower temperature than the core.

Serial No.: 10/771,924

43. (Currently Amended) The ~~fiber network~~ non-woven fabric recited in claim 25 wherein the fiber comprises a side-by-side cross-section wherein one side melts at a lower temperature than the other.

44-47. (Canceled)